[Constitution as of July, 1947]

644 595 Art. 139. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to develop the organizational initiative and political activity of the masses of the people, citizens of the Georgian SSR are guaranteed the right to unite in public organizations: trade unions, cooperative societies, youth organizations, sport and defence organizations, cultural, technical and scientific societies; and the most active and politically conscious citizens in the ranks of the working class and other sections of the working people unite in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), which is the vanguard of the working people in their struggle to strengthen and develop the socialist system and is the leading core of all organizations of the working people, both public and state.

[649] Art. 140. Citizens of the Georgian SSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No person may be placed under arrest except by decision of a court or with the sanction of a procurator.

Art. 141. The inviolability of the homes of citizens and privacy of correspondence are protected by law.

Art. 142. The Georgian SSR affords the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the working people, or for scientific activities, or for struggling for national liberation.

Art. 143. It is the duty of every citizen of the Georgian SSR to abide by the Constitution of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, to observe the laws, to maintain labour discipline, honestly to perform public duties, and to respect the rules of socialist intercourse.

[685] [424] Art. 144. It is the duty of every citizen of the Georgian SSR to safeguard and fortify public, socialist property as the sacred and inviolable foundation of the Soviet system, as the source of the wealth and might of the country, as the source of the prosperity and culture of all the working people.

Persons committing offences against public, socialist property are enemies of the people.

Art. 145. Universal military service is law.

Military service in the Armed Forces of the USSR is an honourable duty of the citizens of the Georgian SSR.

Art. 146. To defend the country is the sacred duty of every citizen of the Georgian SSR. Treason to the motherland - violation of the oath of allegiance, desertion to the enemy, impairing the military power of the state, espionage - is punishable with all the severity of the law as the most heinous of crimes.

Chapter XII. The Electoral System

666 Art. 147. Members of all Soviets of Working People's Deputies -

6: Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RI1 Georgia RI1

The barley for the preparation of the beer is brought by all members of the community where the sanctuary is situated, and is kept in stock in a special building of the sanctuary called *begeli*. And for numerous sacrifices brought during Church festivals, the sanctuary of *Thamar-mepe* even possesses a large flock of sheep, the shepherds of whom are appointed from the members of the congregation, for a period of one year, and are subject to many taboos and regulations, which they must obey during that period.

Any violation of group or private property is regarded as a crime, and in its prosecution the principal matter is the restitution of material damage.

6: Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RI1 Georgia RI1

682 munities the indemnity for the same crime was half a *tsor*. For cutting off a nose, or putting out an eye, the indemnity was equal to one-third the *tsor*. Approximately the same amount was paid for the severing of a hand or foot.

Concerning the indemnity required for different wounds, the wound made by gunfire was regarded as the most grievous. A wound made by the blow of a sabre or dagger was considered as slight. For wounds made on parts of the skull or face, the indemnity was equal to half the *tsor*. Expenses for medical treatment were always paid by the culprit. Indemnities for different kinds of beatings did not amount to much, and consisted usually of one or two *ts'khvandish*, the equivalent of six or twelve Russian rubles, respectively.

3. Theft

685 Theft had a peculiar ethical meaning and interpretation in the eyes of the people. Theft as such, taken generally as an abstract concept, did not exist and was not understood.

The interpretation and meaning of a theft differs according to the place, person and manner involved in committing it; it did not have blood vengeance as a result, but material restitution.

In some instances theft was regarded as a delict and consequently punished. In other cases it was a deed of bravery and courage—a matter of public admiration and esteem. Stealing from a fellow-member of one's own social group was viewed as a grave offense and was severely punished. The usual penalty for the crime consisted in the payment of sevenfold the stolen property, among the Pshavs and Khevsurs.[32] "The thief must repay in kind; thus, if he has stolen a ram, he must give seven rams, among the Tushes."[33] For repeated thefts it was even permissible to kill the thief, without being responsible for his murder, although this happened very seldom.[34]

Among the Svans,[35] theft had no other penalty than the return of the stolen property, although there was an exception made in

[32] Eristov: 132.
[33] Khakhanov: 53.
[34] Zisserman: 250.
[35] Kovalevsky: a, II, 38.

6: Grigolia E-4, 5 (no date) 1939 RI1 Georgia RI1

Princely Svanetia, where the rulers of the country required that an indemnity be paid in addition, for the benefit of the ruling house. Theft connected with breaking into a house was regarded as a very serious offense, and a payment consisting of twelve *azish* was requested. The theft of the iron chain of the hearth (called *sakadeli* in the Georgian) or the small iron three-legged table on which bread was baked was regarded as an especially severe crime.

A discrimination in the importance of the crime was made according to the time and place where it was committed. A crime committed at night was worse than one committed during the day, and a crime perpetrated out of doors was of much less importance than one in a home.

Theft committed outside the group was regarded as neither a crime nor a delict, but on the contrary was viewed as an accomplishment of courage and bravery, elevating the culprit in social prestige and creating even gradations in distinction, according to the danger involved and the success of the accomplishment, the procedure resembling in some ways the *coups* of the American Indians.

Among the Georgians of Megrelia, in time past, a young man had difficulty in getting a wife if he had not stolen at least one horse.[36] There were various and numerous tales of gallant and cunning thieves who outwitted their pursuers and escaped safely with their spoil, and who had the admiration of the people.

The same attitude prevailed also among the other peoples of the Caucasus. Among the Circassians, for example, a young man could not be successful with the fair sex if he had not committed a theft. Taitbout de Marigny[37] gives the following information concerning this matter: "Le plus grand reproche qu'une jeune fille puisse faire a un graçon, c'est de l'ai dire qu'il n'a pas encore pu derober une vache. Mais les proprietés sont respectées parmi les personnes que la paranté, l'amitié, l'hospitalité, ou d'autres liens unissent ensemble."

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[36] Lamberti: 76-8.
[37] Taitbout de Marigny: 291.